

Car Seat Safety For 2011

In April of 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) revised its policy on car seat safety. The following is a brief summary of the policy.

- Children should be rear facing in a car seat until they are two years of age or until they reach the maximum height or weight for their car seat. (30 of the 35 convertible car seats on the market can accommodate children up to 35 pounds in a rear facing position. This means more than 95% of all children less than 2 years can fit in a rear facing seat.)
- Smaller children will benefit from rear facing longer, while other children may reach the maximum height or weight before two years of age.
- Children who outgrow their rear facing seat should be moved to a forward facing seat with a harness, until they reach the maximum height or weight for the forward facing seat
- Older children who outgrow their forward facing seat should be in a booster seat until they are 4 feet 9 inches tall.
- Children should ride in the rear of a vehicle until they are 13 years old.

Many of our parents have asked

“Why does my baby have to be in a rear facing car seat until he or she is more than 2 years old?”

We want our parents to know the following facts:

- Children under age 2 are 75% safer rear facing than forward facing.
- Children in the second year of life are five times less likely to die or be seriously injured in a crash if rear facing than forward facing.
- Only approximately 1 in 1,000 children who are rear facing will suffer a lower extremity injury. That rate is much higher for forward facing children.
- The back seat is the safest place for all children to ride.

At South East Bay Pediatrics, your child’s pediatrician endorses the AAP policy of car seat safety.